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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0038] An apparatus and method for visualization of process conditions in a process chamber or chambers, particularly during the fabrication of integrated circuits on substrates in the process chambers. The apparatus includes an inspection chamber which is installed adjacent to a process chamber. A camera provided in the inspection chamber is used to view the interior of the process chamber as the etching, chemical vapor deposition or other process is carried out in the process chamber. A video monitor is typically connected to the camera for viewing images from the camera. In the event that a defect-precipitating event occurs in the process chamber, such as a mechanical malfunction or accumulation of excessive levels of polymer deposition on the chamber walls, the event is displayed on the monitor in real-time.